



THE HAWKS NEST

OCTOBER 2018

Parents, Guardians and Hawks,

Fall is finally here and I know that many of us are ready for the cooler weather. This time of year generally brings more events and activities and one big event for the school is the VRA Boosterthon Fun Run taking place on November 16th! The Fun Run is the largest fundraiser for the school and we are trying to raise money for additional shade structures for our outside basketball courts as well as a digital marquee for the front of the school. This is a fantastic daylong event coordinated by the PTO to include Kindergarten through 5th grade students running laps with their classmates and our middle school students participating in a color run at the end of the day. Students earn rewards and prizes for their fundraising pledges and a school-wide reward event if we meet our goal of \$40,000. If you are interested in watching or participating during the Fun Run, you must be a cleared volunteer through the KeepnTrack Volunteer Clearance Application process found at: <https://stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply/index.html?db=stjohns>. Clearance is good for three years and you can check your clearance status by calling the front office at 904-547-4090. Thank you in advance for your support of the Fun Run!

We continue to see success with the Positive Behavior and Intervention System (PBIS) here at Valley Ridge! The PBIS committee (led by Dean Brian Gifford and Media Specialist Kathleen Zielinski) does a fantastic job of developing incentives and rewards for students to make "purchases" using Hawk Bucks, which are earned for making positive choices with their behavior. The Hawk Store is open on selected days during the month and there is a large reward event for every grade level per quarter such as an off campus picnic or a raffle to go to a Jacksonville Iceman hockey game. PBIS reward calendars are posted throughout the school as well as in the Hawk Update so students can know what's coming and save up for the rewards that motivate them! VRA recently hosted the annual PBIS Family Bingo Night as a fundraiser for the incentives. It was a wonderful night with over 350 VRA families in attendance. Thank you so much to everyone who participated and helped to make the night such a success!

Congratulations to students Lauryn Edel, Anthony Bismi, and Lucy Harry for each being awarded an honorable mention for their individual submissions to 2018 Betty Griffin House Art and Poetry contest. All three were recognized for their achievement at the October 9th School Board. I know that everyone here at Valley Ridge is extremely proud of their creative accomplishment!

I would like to recognize and congratulate the following individuals for their contributions to the Valley Ridge community.

2018-2019 Teacher of the Year: Ashley Mahaven – (Elementary Physical Education Teacher)

2018-2019 Rookie Teacher of the Year: Jessica Mora – (Middle School Physical Education Teacher)

2018-2019 Instructional Support Member of the Year: Tara Smullen – (Front Office Clerk)

2018-2019 Volunteer of the Year: Maria Salomon

2018-2019 Senior Volunteer of the Year: Gary Hiles

Each one of these individuals help to support the mission and vision of VRA in a real and profound manner. I hope you will join me in thanking and congratulating each of them for their dedication to the students at Valley Ridge.

Go Hawks!

VALLEY RIDGE ACADEMY

Good News at VRA!

The K-2 students had yet another opportunity to spend or save their Hawk Bucks! This crew from Mrs. Kovacs' class chose to splurge on ice cream.



In September our focus Character trait was Fairness. Fairness is one of the most difficult Pillars of Character to define clearly. People often see decisions that help them as being “fair” and those that do not as being “unfair.” Fairness is often a matter of perception. Although some decisions are clearly unfair, the fact is there is usually more than one fair choice. Being fair means you:

- Listen to others and try to understand what they are feeling and saying.
- Consider all the facts, including opposing views.
- Use the same standards for everyone in the same situation.

Are you being fair? Make a list of some of your family rules and the consequences of not following them. Ask your children what their rules would be if they were in charge of making them. List these next to the actual rules.

Discuss the rules one by one. Ask, “Is this one fair? Why or why not? What would happen if we adopted this rule?” Compare these to the first list in terms of fairness. Decide what will happen if the rules are broken. Consider revising some of the current rules if youth can show how their suggestions are fairer.



SEPTEMBER CHARACTER COUNTS

Our September assembly took place on October 5th to recognize those students who have shown outstanding Fairness characteristic. Congratulations to all our students and we are happy to focus on the following elementary students.

Kindergarten: Abigail Helfer, Leo Hill, Anna Caldwell, Grey Mills, Zoey Nguyen, Caitlin Carrino, Sawyer Trecker, Killian O'Connell. **First Grade:** Emma Krause, Francesca Contuzzi, Amelia Kosho, Kinsley Clark, Amelia Morrow, Chloe Condit, William Sadlo, Lexi Carlson
Second Grade: Hope Lang, Blake Muldowney, Caleb Buckley, Madynn Grex, Ellie Ostrander, Brianne Easterly, Carmella Redman, Gabby Zveare, Beckett Pflieger **Third Grade:** Jenna Troyer, Anna Halter, Aaron Schoer, Mia Lee Chong, Joshua Noboa, Jackson Hipler, Evan Jones, Adelynn Rosario **Fourth Grade:** Jax Drayton, Kaylin Chen, Payton Grex, Sophia Lorch, Nolan McCool, Ron Quinones, Bailey Bruckner **Fifth Grade:** Benjamin Yarashas, Zakariya Lakhani, Sydney Minx, Emma Dresback, Blake Preusler, Malana Patel, Andrew Bennie



Kindergarten
1st Grade



2nd Grade
3rd Grade

4th Grade
5th Grade



MIDDLE SCHOOL

CHARACTER COUNTS SEPTEMBER

On October 11th we celebrated our first group of middle school students who were chosen for outstanding character in the month of September. Many thanks to all our students who strive to practice the pillars of character at VRA. Focus this month was given to the following students:

Maya Johnson, Daniel Lushnja, Jackson McConnell, Bella Kimball, Samuel McConnell, Joshua Schilling, Miranda Harmon, Haley Petersen, Camryn Smith, Kendall Brown, John Rowan, Calla Sunderland, P.J. Gray, Emily Pickee, Sadie Joseph, Daniel Hancock, Skylar Kurtz, Aryaman Bansal, Aubrey Bedwell, Hanna Cline, David Ulmer, Grace Mayhew, Grace Perez



October			
Event	Grade Levels	Date	Cost (Hawk Bucks)
Cookie Day (Cafeteria)	K-2	Monday, October 8	\$2
*Field Trip to Greenleaf Park (picnic)	K-2	Friday, October 12	\$25
Eat Lunch Outside	6-8	Friday, October 12	\$2
Cookie Day (Cafeteria)	6-8	Monday, October 15	\$2
Hawk Store	K-2	Monday, October 22	--
Cookie Day (Cafeteria)	3-5	Monday, October 22	\$2
Hawk Store	6-8	Tuesday, October 23	--
Hawk Store	3-5	Wednesday, October 24	--
*Dance (After School)	6-8	Friday, October 26	\$15

MORE GOOD NEWS.....

Congratulations to our staff and those specifically being chosen by their peers to be amongst our very best!



Jessica Mora Rookie Teacher of the Year

Ashley Mahaven Teacher of the Year

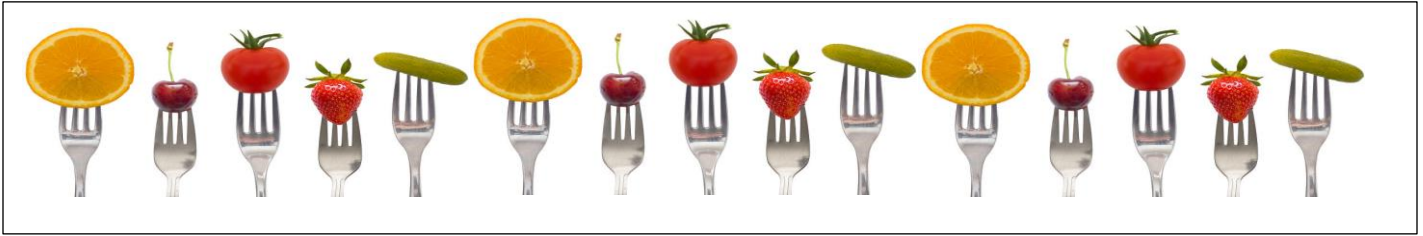


Tara Smullen – Non Instructional Support Professional

Hispanic Heritage Month



Join in on the fun and celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month! The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period starting on September 15 and ending on **October 15**. Poster and Essay Contest – The Poster Contest is open to all K-3 students in Florida. Winners will receive a prize at Governor Rick Scott and First Lady Ann Scott’s Hispanic Heritage Month celebration to be held in Tallahassee. Reasonable travel and lodging expenses will be paid for the winners and one immediate family member. The Essay Contest is open to all 4th through 12th grade students in the state of Florida. Winners will receive a 4-Year Florida College Plan scholarship provided by Florida Prepaid College Foundation. Deadline for submissions to both contests is Monday, October 15, 2018 . [Ctl Click Here to open Contest Flyer](#)



Dear Parents and Guardians,

If you completed a Family Meal Application last year and your child received free or reduced meals please read carefully. Your child's meal status (free or reduced) at the end of last school year will continue through September 23, 2018. Unless a new Family Meal Application has been processed and approved by September 23, 2018 your child's meal status will revert to PAID. You may complete an online application by using this link, <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/food/free/>. You can also print a form on the same website. Applications may be picked up in the front office at your school. Please do not delay in order to prevent a gap in your student's meal eligibility.

REMINDER: Students attending South Woods Elementary, The Webster School, Mason Elementary, Osceola Elementary, Crookshank Elementary, Murray Middle School, Gamble Rogers Middle School, Sebastian Middle School, St. Johns Technical High School or Transitions do not need to complete a lunch application.

If you have any questions, please contact the Food and Nutrition Services Department at 904-547-8931. Thank you, Sean Prevatt, Director for Food and Nutrition Services



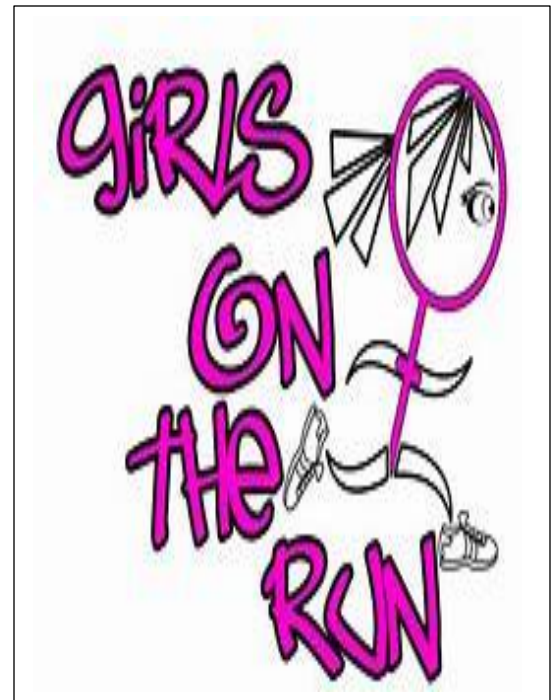
VRA Food Drive for families in St Johns County

Sponsored by Early Act Club

October 16-19

Grades 3-5-bring food to Mrs. Sandler's villa 19

Grades 6-8-bring food to Mrs. Dresback's room 610

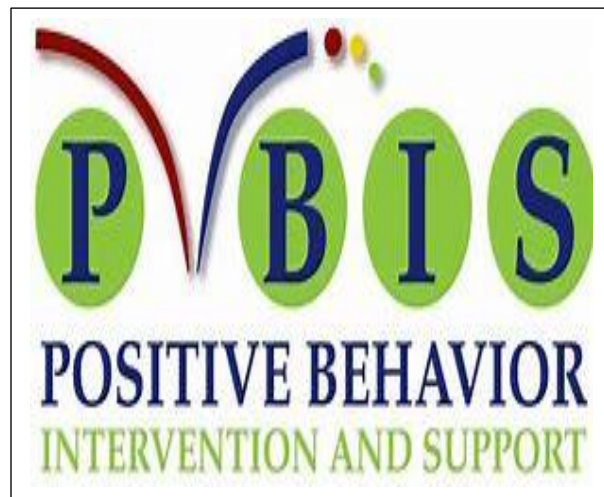


Our Girls on the run team has just begun and we are having a great time learning about each girl on the running team. By the end of the season our goal for each girl is to complete a 5K race at UNF. The girls set lap goals and track their laps each practice. At the end of our practices we come together and do a Girls On The Run cheer and end with GO HAWKS!!!! Coach Xanders and Coach Kovacs are so proud of our girls!

Our 2018 Hawk Fun Run will take place on Friday, November 16th! Please save the date for this exciting event at Valley Ridge Academy. More information coming soon.



FIRST GRADE FUN AND LEARNING



Our PBIS team of teachers and staff passing out ice cream cups to the 1st graders for Hawk Bucks that were earned for positive behaviors at VRA!!!

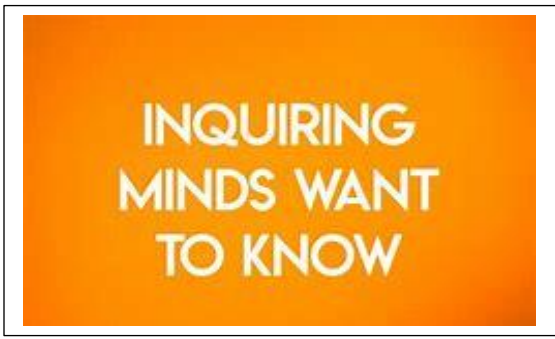
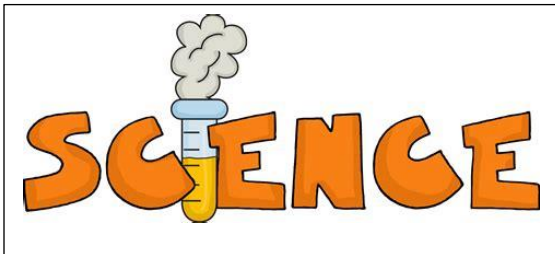


First grade teachers created a cool opportunity for all of the 1st graders on the grade level to rotate to each teacher for a very special reading lesson and activity to get to know each first grade teacher. (Ms. Painter, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Kovacs, Mrs. Curtis, Mrs. Barrs, Mrs. Hernandez, Mrs. Klabacka, and Mrs. Williams) We read most of the Laura Numeroff books like: *If you Give a Mouse a Cookie*, *If You Give a Mouse a Muffin...* for a quick author study and got to know the 1st grade teachers. This was important to the teachers to do this lesson because of how hard the 1st grade team works to flexible group among the grade level and to work with and learn about all of the VRA first grade students. :)



The first graders each have a brand new team shirt. We will wear them to our field studies and on character counts celebration days! What a great way to show our HAWK PRIDE for our character pillars at and away from school.

First Grade Shows Their True Character



With our new Science Curriculum first graders now have some neat interactive science lessons online and in our classrooms. This is just a small example of a few first grade classes getting together to be scientists and to investigate. The students came up with a hypothesis and questions they would like to find out. We were comparing and observing apples and oranges. We used magnifiers to take a good look at the seeds and texture of the 2 different fruits.

BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK AT VRA

Blessings in a Backpack is a non-profit organization that helps feed school children in the United States who are at risk of going hungry on the weekends. Its mission is to mobilize communities, individuals, and resources to provide food on the weekends for elementary school children across America.

Blessings in a Backpack is partnering with Valley Ridge to provide snacks to 30 of our students. We at Valley Ridge Academy would like to extend the opportunity for any school age children to receive a weekly snack to supplement what is already provided at home.

If you would like your child to be considered for this program please call or email Susan Basil in Guidance - Susan.Basil@stjohns.k12.fl.us or 547-4111. All requests are confidential.



RED RIBBON WEEK

This year, Student Council would like for EVERYONE to participate in our Red Ribbon Week Homecoming. The following dress-up days are scheduled for the week beginning October 22!

Monday – Proud to Be An American: Wear Red, White, and Blue



Tuesday – We Have Positive Character from Head to Toe: Silly Hair/Hat and Crazy Socks Day



Wednesday – Where Everyone Belongs: Wear Orange for Unity Day



Thursday – Wild West on the Ridge, Make Smart Choices Partner: Wear Western Wear (no guns or rifles)



Friday – Good Character Never Goes Out of Style: Dress the Decades



RED RIBBON WEEK

OCTOBER 22 TO 26

Dancing Through the Decades



Friday, October 26, 2018

3:00-4:30 P.M.

Where: VRA Gymnasium

Who: VRA 6th-8th Grade Students

Admission Cost: \$5.00 –OR- 15 Hawk Bucks

Tickets will be on sale from October 1st-19th (RSVP Required). Tickets WILL NOT be sold at the door!



GUIDANCE NEWS

FAMILIES UNITED Challenge K-5

VRA Guidance will have a FAMILIES UNITED challenge during the week of October 20-28.

As we celebrate Red Ribbon/Character Counts/Unity Day later this month we want to remind everyone that the best prevention against risky student behavior is building strong relationships and open supportive communication.

We would like to challenge families to “unplug”, **be present** and **focused** on quality family time for one evening during this week.

A challenge form will be sent home along with VRA student derived ideas of ways families have fun without technology.

-Students who participate with their families in the challenge can return the challenge form signed by a parent to receive a \$3 Hawk Buck.

Please take some time to read this informative article on recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and stay UNITED!

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/138/5/e20162591.full.pdf>

Families United Middle School Challenge

A middle school challenge form is on the next page, in Schoology or through your student’s ICT/Critical Thinking Teacher’s account for the Families United Middle School Challenge.

Students who participate with their families in the challenge can return the Middle School Challenge Reflection sheet signed by a parent to receive a \$3 Hawk Buck. The middle school forms can be turned in to their ICT/Critical Thinking/Band Teacher or even to Ms. MacNaught.

Below is a live link of helpful resources. You may also go to the Guidance webpage for more information.

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- [Bullying Prevention Education: What Parents Need to Know](#)
- [Student Bullying Prevention Education](#)
- [Bullying or Harassment Reporting Form \(Elementary School\)](#)
- [Bullying or Harassment Reporting Form \(Middle School\)](#)
- [Cyberbullying and Sexting Prevention](#)
- [Problem Solving Steps and Child Safety Matters](#)
- [Safety Brief – Parent Letter](#)
- [Safety Brief – Child Maltreatment](#)
- [Safety Brief – Bullying and Cyberbullying](#)

Family Reflection Sheet

Red Ribbon/Character Counts/Unity Week

The purpose of this form is to allow students time to reflect on their feelings concerning the family activity. A student who wishes to receive Hawk Bucks for participating in a family activity must complete this form and have it signed by his/her parents. The form must be returned to your ICT/Band or Critical Thinking teacher the following day at the beginning of class.

Behavior - What activity I did with the family: _____

Consequences of My Actions - What effect did this activity have on my relationship with my family? .

Appropriate Behavior – How do you think having more time for family activities will help build stronger family relationships and more open communication? _____

Student's name: _____ Date: _____

Student's signature: _____

Parent's signature: _____

Teacher's signature: _____

“Wonder of the Holidays”

Firefighters for Families is again sponsoring a holiday program to support families in need.

We have applications and more information regarding the program in the VRA Guidance office. For an application or more details, please contact Sue Basil at 904-547-4111 or Susan.basil@stjohns.k12.il.us. All applications must be returned to the VRA Guidance Department no later than November 2, 2018.

If you have any questions about the St Johns County program you may also call Jenn Hampton at 904-209-1747.



St. Johns County Fire Rescue

Firefighters for Families

3657 Gaines Rd.

St. Augustine, FL 32084

904-209-1747

SQUARE 1 ART FUNDRAISER

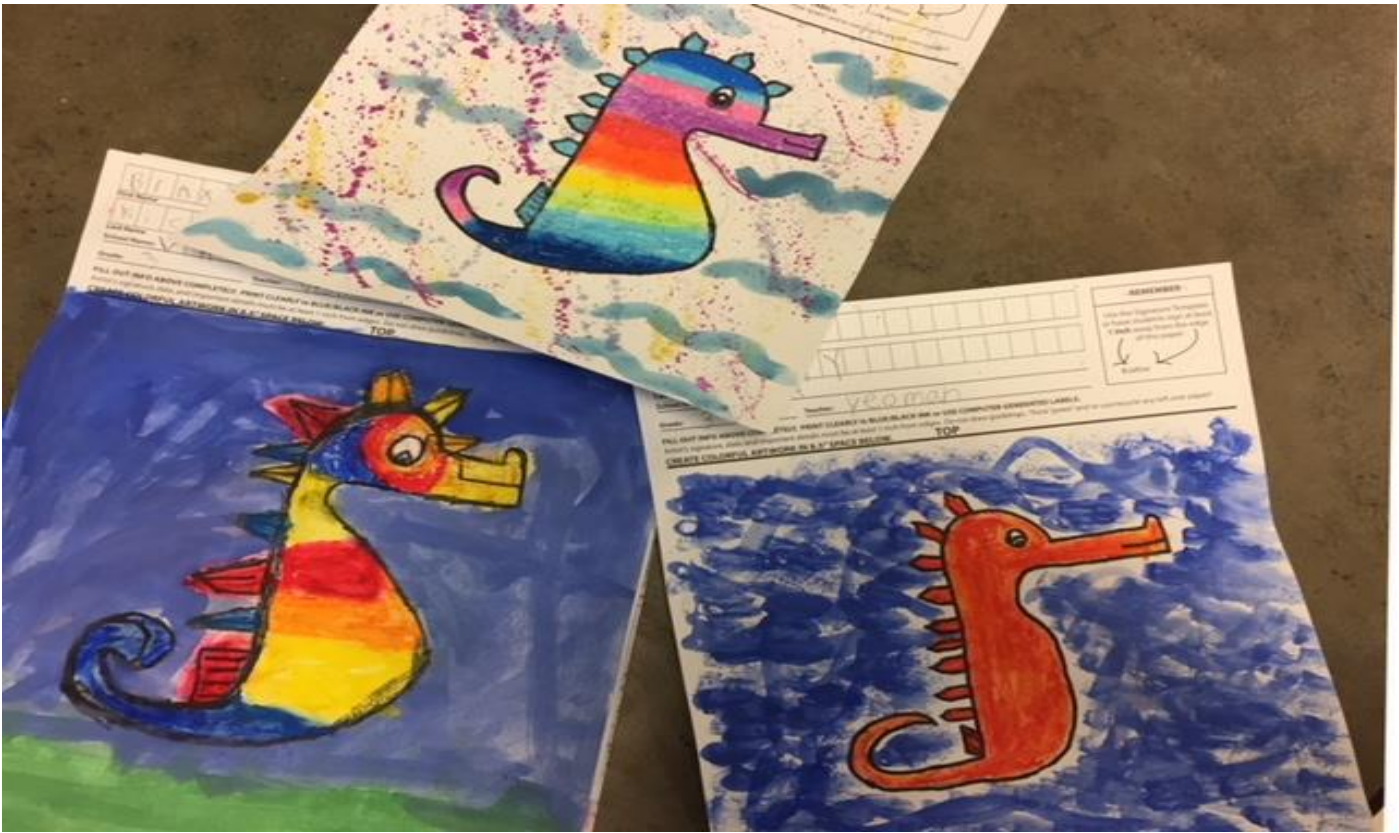


Our Square 1 Art fundraiser masterpieces will be coming home in a few weeks. We are just finishing up over 1100 colorful and fun projects. Students in grades K-8 have been busy creating masterpieces that will be available for purchase. These great art pieces will be re-printed onto anything from cute tote bags, key chains, coffee mugs, water bottles, and so much more. Look for a packet coming home with your student artist towards the end of the month. Don't forget each student will receive FREE sticks of their artwork too. These make great personalized holiday gifts too!

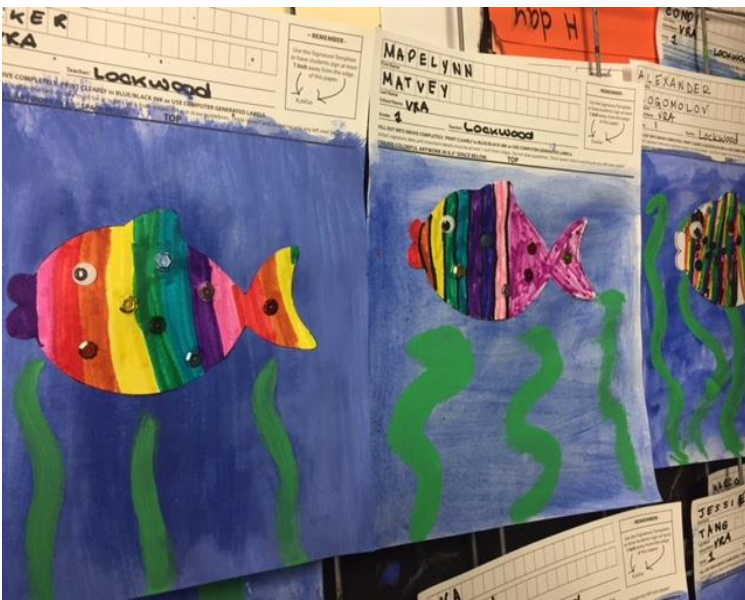


Fourth grade made some Crazy Crabs that are hysterical and will definitely bring a smile to your face.

**Go to #VraPicassos to see more
artwork created here at VRA.**



3rd Gr read Mr. Seahorse by Eric Carle and created stunning mixed media seahorses that I really think will impress!



Kindergarten and First grade read The Rainbow Fish and created their own unique colorful under the sea artwork. Each one is just as unique as they are.

If you aren't following us yet, the Elementary Art classes are on Instagram at #VraPicassos and I post multiple times a week so you can see how we create, learn, and get messy (all from the comfort of your phone). Artfully Yours, Ms. Bayliss

MENTORS NEEDED



Do you like sharing your many experiences? Do you have time once a week to be a great role model? Are you a good listener? If you answered “yes” we would love to have you here at VRA to serve as a student mentor! We can provide a flexible schedule and the opportunity to work with a student in the grade level of your choice. If you have not yet been cleared as a VRA volunteer, please click on: [school access form](#) and complete the questionnaire. Once you are a VRA approved volunteer go to: [Survey Monkey mentor program](#) and complete the questionnaire. We will get back to you with a teacher and student assignment as quickly as we can! Thank you in advance for your time to support our VRA Mentor Program.

BRING YOUR PARENT TO WORKOUT NIGHT



SPONSORED BY

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 17, 2018, 630PM-8PM

*VALLEY RIDGE ACADEMY GYMNASIUM

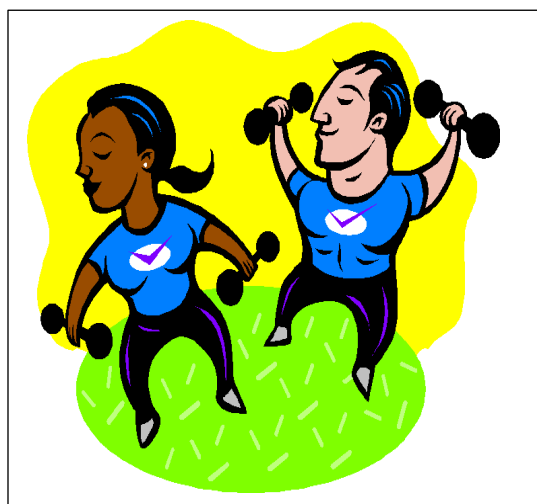
*ADMISSION IS FREE!

*ALL FAMILY MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

*PARENTAL SUPERVISION OF ALL CHILDREN IS REQUIRED

*Remember, these workouts are “high intensity”-make sure children attending are physically capable to participate.

*Come for one, two or all three sessions.



***Bring your family for free fun and fitness!**

*Choose up to 3 H.I.I.T. (High Intensity Interval Training) workouts to participate in:

- 630-650: H.I.I.T. w/ Coach Hallett and Coach Mora. Experience the joy of Workout Wednesday.

-7-720: Zumba w/ Señora Santinho. Fitness dancing combining interval training and music.

-730-750: H.I.I.T. w/ ORANGE THEORY FITNESS!!!!